

# NATURE CORNER



**OCTOBER 2024-  
MAY 2025**

**LEARN ABOUT OUR OUTDOOR AND  
SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMMING**

**Discover the efforts made by our Agency  
in promoting environmental education  
and the protection of our planet**



**PLANTATION  
Parks & Recreation**

The Plantation Community Garden project is a collaborative effort involving multiple departments - the Plantation Parks & Recreation Department, the Plantation City Hall Administration, the Plantation Public Works Department, the Plantation Police Department, the Plantation Planning & Zoning Department, and the Plantation Garden Club.

Our initiative is designed to offer a diverse array of environmentally conscious, educational, and culinary events, programs, and classes aimed at teenagers in our city. By participating in our community garden, you can contribute to promoting healthy lifestyles, environmental awareness, and community involvement.

We welcome all those who wish to join us in this endeavor. All sponsorships raised will go towards maintaining our Plantation Community Garden and other nature and environmental initiatives, allowing us to reach even more community members.



Schizopetalus Hibiscus  
(Japanese Lantern)



**Plantation**  
the grass is greener<sup>SM</sup>



**PLANTATION**  
**Parks & Recreation**

*Where Community and Fun Become One!*



The Plantation Community Garden is home to various plant species and more than six fruit trees that serve as a food source for the local wildlife, including butterflies, birds, and insects. It is comprised of nine raised beds equipped with water and irrigation systems.

The garden's safety surface complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), ensuring accessibility for everyone.



Additionally, it features a rock fountain that enables different animals to drink clean water, two small birdhouses that hummingbirds can use for shelter, a compost tumbler to promote recycling, and a sitting area for visitors to relax and enjoy the garden.



The Garden measures 30 feet by 60 feet and is located at the Jim Ward Community Center. This initiative is a successful collaboration between various Departments of the City of Plantation, with the Parks and Recreation Department spearheading the effort. The goal is to provide environmental and educational programs and classes for the city's youth, with the Teen Garden Club being the first program offered at this location.

The Teen Garden Club program allows teens to fulfill their school volunteer hours and learn about gardening, sustainability, and nature. The Plantation Garden Club, a renowned organization established in our city, offers its members, primarily senior citizens, the opportunity to mentor the Teen Garden Club, which has become the first intergenerational program in our town.

The garden serves as a NatureScape water conservation property model, providing a safe environment that brings our city's teenagers and seniors closer to nature while understanding the importance of sustainability and water conservation. To achieve this, we are incorporating water-saving techniques, native plants, and eco-friendly features. Implementing efficient irrigation systems like drip irrigation helps minimize water wastage.



# TEEN GARDEN CLUB

Help grow fresh fruits and vegetables in our community garden at the Jim Ward Community Center.

## Program Benefits:

- Service hours for school
- Gardening skills
- Mentorship
- Learn about important topics like sustainability, ecosystems, conservation and life skills
- Program commitment: October- April

 For more information call:  
**954-585-2346**



**PLANTATION  
Parks & Recreation**

*Where Community and Fun Become One!*



@PlantationParks



Plantation  
Garden Club



## Teen Garden Club Award Winner!

Oct 2024 - May 2025



### 2024 Innovative Programming Environmental Sustainability/Resilience

Congratulations to our Recreation and Administrative Division for winning the 2024 FRPA Innovative Programming Award.

The Florida Recreation and Park Association's Innovative Programming Award recognizes creative and trendsetting ideas that expand community participation in leisure programs.

It honors agencies that have shown leadership in developing and executing programs that support public understanding of the role of parks and recreation in various aspects. Programs addressing diversity, equity, and inclusion are also eligible for this award.

## Park Your Stress: Unleash the Mental Health Magic of Your Local Parks!

Think local parks are just patches of grass? Think again! These green oases are powerhouses for your mental well-being, offering a treasure trove of perks that can lift your spirits, melt away stress, and rejuvenate your mind.

- **Stress Begone!**

Ever felt the weight of the world on your shoulders? Park it! Spending time in nature can work wonders for your stress levels. Just being around greenery can lower those pesky cortisol levels—the hormone that makes stress feel like a never-ending rollercoaster. A stroll through the park is like hitting the reset button on your stress meter!

- **Brain Boost Central**

Looking to sharpen your focus? Parks can be your brain's best friend. A wander through your local park gives your mind a refreshing break from routine and sharpens your concentration and problem-solving skills. It's like a mental workout with a view!



**By Michael Ambrosio, CPSI  
Superintendent of Parks  
Plantation Parks and Recreation Department**

- **Mood Lift-Off**

Feeling down? Parks are mood elevators! Whether you're taking a leisurely walk, watching the birds, or simply basking in the sun, the natural beauty of parks can chase away the blues and calm anxiety. Those serene settings are practically designed to boost your mood and help you find your zen.

- **Brain Boost Central**

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- **Mindfulness Oasis**

Need a moment of peace? Parks offer the perfect backdrop for mindfulness and reflection. Embrace the tranquility, breathe in the fresh air, and find your inner calm. It's a sanctuary for self-discovery and relaxation.

- **Creativity Playground**

Feeling stuck in a creative rut? Parks can spark inspiration like magic! The vibrant environment can ignite new ideas and fresh perspectives, making it a playground for creativity and innovative thinking.

So why not make the most of our 42 local parks? Dive into their mental health benefits and experience a life that's more balanced, joyful, and invigorated. Don't just visit a park—let it be your go-to remedy for a happier you!



- **Get Moving, Feel Groovy**

Exercise in a park is like a double whammy for your mental health. Jogging, playing sports, or even a brisk walk releases endorphins—your body's natural "feel-good" chemicals. Say hello to a boosted mood and a happier outlook!

- **Social Spark**

Parks are where communities come alive! Whether meeting friends, joining a game or attending an event, these green spaces foster social connections that can melt loneliness and strengthen your sense of belonging. They're the heartbeat of community spirit!



**LOOKING  
FOR  
SPONSORS**



**PLANTATION CAMPOUT  
FRIDAY JANUARY 10TH-  
SATURDAY, JANUARY 11TH**

**JOIN US FOR A CAMP-TASTIC TIME AT VOLUNTEER PARK!  
EVERY FAMILY WILL RECEIVE A 20 SQ FT. CAMPSITE TO SET UP  
AND MAKE CAMP FOR THE NIGHT!**

**ALL AGES WELCOME!**

**(MINORS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT)**

**REGISTRATION OPENS  
MONDAY, DECEMBER 16TH  
LIMITED SPOTS AVAILABLE**

**\$30 per  
campsite**

**Max: 6 persons**

**VOLUNTEER PARK  
12050 W SUNRISE BLVD,  
PLANTATION, FL 33323**




**CHECK IN: FRI 3PM-5PM  
CHECK OUT: SAT 9AM-11AM  
QUIET HOURS: 10PM-7AM**

**Activities:  
Family Field Day  
S'mores  
Night Hike**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL 954-452-2510**

# EDIBLES TO PLANT IN October

	North	Central	South
 EASY TO TRANSPLANT	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Strawberry, Swiss Chard	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Strawberry, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tropical Spinaches	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Strawberry, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches
 TRANSPLANT WITH CARE	Celery, Mustard, Spinach	Celery, Mustard, Pineapple, Spinach	Amaranth, Calabaza, Celery, Long Squashes, Luffa, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Seminole Pumpkin, Spinach
 USE SEEDS	Carrots, Onions (bunching), Radish, Turnips	Carrots, Onions (bulbing, bunching), Radish, Turnips	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Okra, Onions (bulbing, bunching), Peas (southern), Radish, Squashes, Turnips




UF IFAS Extension UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



Gardening SOLUTIONS

GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu  
Text only: go.ufl.edu/EdibleText

# EDIBLES TO PLANT IN November

	North	Central	South
 EASY TO TRANSPLANT	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Kale, Kohlrabi, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Strawberry, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches
 TRANSPLANT WITH CARE	Celery, Mustard, Spinach	Celery, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Spinach	Amaranth, Calabaza, Celery, Long Squashes, Luffa, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Seminole Pumpkin, Spinach
 USE SEEDS	Carrots, Onions (bunching), Radish, Turnips	Carrots, Onions (bunching), Peas (English), Radish, Turnips	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Onions (bunching), Peas (English, southern), Radish, Squashes, Turnips

UF IFAS Extension UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA



Gardening SOLUTIONS

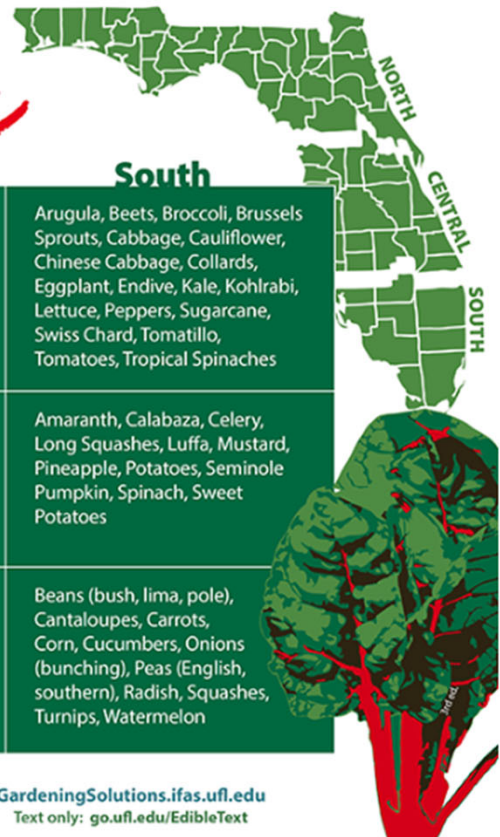
GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu  
Text only: go.ufl.edu/EdibleText

(Vegetables to Plant in April - Gardening Solutions - University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, n.d.)  
<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/vegetable-gardening-in-florida.html#monthly>



# EDIBLES TO PLANT IN *December*

	North	Central	South
 EASY TO TRANSPLANT	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Kale, Kohlrabi, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches
 TRANSPLANT WITH CARE	Celery, Mustard, Spinach	Celery, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Spinach	Amaranth, Calabaza, Celery, Long Squashes, Luffa, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Seminole Pumpkin, Spinach, Sweet Potatoes
 USE SEEDS	Carrots, Onions (bunching), Radish, Turnips	Carrots, Onions (bunching), Peas (English), Radish, Turnips	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Cantaloupes, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Onions (bunching), Peas (English, southern), Radish, Squashes, Turnips, Watermelon



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UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

FLORIDA MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS

Gardening SOLUTIONS

GardeningSolutions.ifas.ufl.edu  
Text only: go.ufl.edu/EdibleText

# EDIBLES TO PLANT IN *January*

	North	Central	South
 EASY TO TRANSPLANT	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard	Arugula, Beets, Broccoli, Brussels Sprouts, Cabbage, Cauliflower, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kale, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tomatoes	Arugula, Chinese Cabbage, Collards, Eggplant, Endive, Kohlrabi, Lettuce, Peppers, Sugarcane, Swiss Chard, Tomatillo, Tomatoes, Tropical Spinaches
 TRANSPLANT CAREFULLY	Celery, Mustard, Potatoes, Spinach	Celery, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Spinach	Amaranth, Calabaza, Celery, Long Squash, Luffah, Mustard, Pineapple, Potatoes, Seminole Pumpkin, Spinach, Sweet Potatoes
 USE SEEDS	Carrots, Onion (bunching), Peas (English), Radish, Turnips	Cantaloupe, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Onion (bunching), Peas (English), Radish, Squash, Turnips, Watermelon	Beans (bush, lima, pole), Cantaloupe, Carrots, Corn, Cucumbers, Okra, Onion (bunching), Peas (English, Southern), Radish, Squash, Turnips, Watermelon



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FLORIDA MASTER GARDENER VOLUNTEERS

Gardening SOLUTIONS

For more information, please visit  
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(Vegetables to Plant in April - Gardening Solutions - University of Florida, Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, n.d.)  
<https://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/plants/edibles/vegetables/vegetable-gardening-in-florida.html#monthly>



**PLANTATION**  
**Parks & Recreation**

*Where Community and Fun Become One!*

**Save the date!**



**Saturday, April 5th**  
**Pine Island Park**  
**320 S. Pine Island Road**



## Meet our Volunteer Mentors: Linda Alexis



Linda's journey into the world of gardening began on the tropical islands of the Philippines. Born during World War II, Linda's early years were marked by simplicity and a deep connection to nature. Her grandmother, a skilled gardener, instilled in her a love for the land. Linda fondly recalls her childhood, spent helping her grandmother tend to fruit trees and learning the intricacies of plant care. "I used to run to the stream to fetch water, and I remember my dad building structures to bring water to our mountain home," she says with a nostalgic smile.

As a child from a large family, Linda experienced the rigors of rural life. However, when her family moved to the city, they adapted their gardening passion to a smaller space. Linda's mother maintained a modest garden, growing vegetables and herbs, which Linda eagerly helped with after school. This early exposure to urban gardening sparked a lifelong passion in Linda, which she carried with her through life's many chapters.

## Oct 2024 - May 2025

Linda's journey took her to the United States in 1966, where she began a new chapter as a nurse in Philadelphia. There, she met her future husband, and they moved to Florida. Linda continued her nursing career while raising two daughters and later enjoying the company of five grandchildren. Her commitment to community service remained strong, reflecting her desire to give back and share her knowledge.

Since retiring from nursing in 2015, Linda has fully immersed herself in gardening. Her Florida garden is a testament to her dedication, featuring an impressive array of tropical fruits like mangoes, star fruit, and even macadamia trees. Linda has mastered the art of growing and harvesting vanilla beans, a feat that few in Florida can claim. Her garden is not just a personal sanctuary but a place of learning and discovery.

Through her local community center, Linda discovered the Teen Garden Club, an initiative to engage young people with the wonders of gardening. Eager to share her expertise, Linda became a mentor, excited to inspire the next generation of gardeners. Her involvement has been nothing short of transformative. "The kids are so enthusiastic and eager to learn," Linda shares. "Some of them didn't even know the names of common vegetables, but they're soaking up knowledge like sponges."

Linda's dedication to the Teen Garden Club continues her lifelong commitment to helping others. Her background as a nurse and her passion for gardening have combined to create a unique and rewarding experience for both herself and her students. The camaraderie and enthusiasm within the club are palpable, and Linda's impact on her young protégés is profound and lasting.

As the Teen Garden Club grows and flourishes, it is clear that Linda Alexis's legacy is one of nurturing both plants and people. Her story is a testament to the power of passion and the importance of sharing knowledge, and her influence will undoubtedly continue to bloom in the hearts and minds of the young gardeners she mentors.

# Embracing Art and Nature: Plantation's Newest Park Gem

Oct 2024 - May 2025

**By Anthony Thomas M.S. CPRP, CYSA  
Recreation Services Supervisor  
Plantation Parks and Recreation Department**

For generations, nature has been a muse for artists and a cornerstone of cultural expression. The physical world, untouched by human hands—comprising of landscapes, diverse flora and fauna, and serene environments—has long captivated human imagination. The allure of nature, with its blend of beauty and raw power, is as profound today as ever.

Not only does nature provide a feast for the eyes, but it also offers significant benefits for our overall well-being. Studies show that interacting with nature boosts physical health, enhances mental wellness, and uplifts emotional states. However, as we navigate the challenges of climate change, it is crucial to approach our interaction with nature mindfully. Our role as caretakers is to protect and preserve these natural wonders for the enjoyment and benefit of future generations.

Throughout history, nature's splendor has inspired some of the world's most celebrated artists. From Monet's tranquil water lilies to Van Gogh's swirling skies and Friedrich's contemplative landscapes, nature has often been a source of artistic inspiration.

Plantation is fortunate to be surrounded by lush natural beauty. Despite the urban hustle—characterized by busy streets and shopping centers —Plantation boasts 42 parks. These green spaces offer a peaceful retreat from the everyday chaos, providing residents and visitors alike with an opportunity to connect with nature.





In a bid to further blend art with nature, Plantation has recently introduced an innovative feature in our parks: recycled wind turbine blades transformed into artistic benches. These unique benches have been adorned with colorful murals created by talented local artists. Each piece reflects the natural beauty of the area.

The newly installed benches can be found in several popular locations, including Central Park, Jim Ward Park, Liberty Tree Park, Botanical Gardens, Volunteer Park, Happy Tails Dog Park, and the Plantation Community Center. We encourage you to visit these parks, take a moment to relax on these beautifully painted benches, and observe how the fusion of art and nature enhances your experience.

By embracing both the artistic and environmental elements of these benches, Plantation aims to offer residents and visitors a chance to enjoy nature's tranquility while engaging with vibrant local art. Take a stroll, snap a few photos, and let the harmonious blend of colors and natural settings uplift your spirit—even if only for a brief moment.

As nature continues to inspire some of humanity's greatest achievements, it remains a profound source of creativity and serenity. Plantation's new park benches are a testament to this enduring connection, celebrating the beauty of nature through the lens of art.

## City of Plantation 'In Honor of Program

### **Brick Paver (\$125)**

For \$125.00, a (4" x 8") brick paver can be installed at one of the following parks: Happy Tails Dog Park or Rae Carole Armstrong Liberty Tree Park. While requests for installing a brick paver in a specific area within the park will be considered, it will be at the discretion of the Parks & Recreation Department. Engraving specifications: a maximum of 50 characters (up to 3 lines max) and no special characters are allowed. \*Allow 4-6 weeks for production\*

### **Memory Tree (\$250)**

For a minimum donation of \$250.00, a memory tree can be planted at one of our parks. While requests for planting at a specific park will be considered, the tree's location, size, and variety will be at the discretion of the Parks & Recreation Department. \*Please note: the donated tree will not be marked for identification purposes, as such memory trees are not memorials and may not be decorated with flowers, ribbons, photos, or other items\*



**Scan the QR Code  
to learn more.**

**For inquiries or questions regarding the City of Plantation 'In Honor Of' program, please email  
[MIThompson@plantation.org](mailto:MIThompson@plantation.org)**

# YOGA

in the park  
with @the\_mindful\_of  
Text your email to 954.682.0367  
for class updates

September 2024 - May 2025  
Every Saturday  
9 a.m. - 10 a.m.



1st, 2nd, 5th: Liberty Tree Park  
3rd: Volunteer Park  
4th: Jim Ward Community Center

### Ingredients for four portions

#### For the Cake:

- 1 cup finely grated carrots (about 2 medium carrots)
- 1/2 cup whole wheat flour
- 1/4 cup almond flour (or finely ground almonds)
- 1/4 cup coconut sugar (or another natural sweetener like maple syrup or honey)
- 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce
- 1/4 cup plain Greek yogurt
- 1 large egg
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg

- 1/4 tsp salt

- Optional: 1/4 cup chopped walnuts or raisins for added texture

#### For the Frosting:

- 1/2 cup plain Greek yogurt (use full fat for a creamier texture)
- 1-2 tbsp honey or maple syrup (to taste)
- 1/2 tsp vanilla extract

### Instructions:

- **Preheat the Oven:** Preheat your oven to 350°F (175°C). Grease a small cake pan (about 6 inches) or line it with parchment paper.
- **Prepare the Carrots:** Peel and finely grate the carrots. Set them aside.
- **Mix Dry Ingredients:** In a medium bowl, whisk together the whole wheat flour, almond flour, coconut sugar, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt.
- **Mix Wet Ingredients:** In a separate bowl, combine the grated carrots, applesauce, Greek yogurt, and egg. Mix well.
- **Combine Ingredients:** Gradually add the wet mixture to the dry ingredients, stirring until just combined. If you're using walnuts or raisins, fold them in now.
- **Bake the Cake:** Pour the batter into the prepared cake pan and smooth the top with a spatula. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.
- **Cool the Cake:** Allow the cake to cool in the pan for about 10 minutes, then transfer it to a wire rack to cool completely.
- **Prepare the Frosting:** While the cake is cooling, make the frosting by mixing Greek yogurt, honey (or maple syrup), and vanilla extract in a small bowl. Adjust the sweetness to your taste.
- **Frost the Cake:** Spread the Greek yogurt frosting evenly on top once the cake is completely cool.
- **Serve and Enjoy:** Slice the cake into 4 portions and enjoy!



For more details about our upcoming events, fun activities, and programs, scan the QR Code provided below:



To receive updates about nature and sustainable programming from our Department, or if you have any innovative ideas on how our Parks and Recreation Department can positively impact the environment and promote sustainability, please join our email list by sending an email to [NatureCorner@plantation.org](mailto:NatureCorner@plantation.org).

Let's work together to create a brighter, more sustainable future for our community!



**@PlantationParks**